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PERMANENT MISSION OF PORTUGAL TO THE UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT BY

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TO THE FORTY FOURTH SESSION

OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLEY

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the Republic of Colombia against the network of drug traffickers. Allow me to express Portugal's unequivocal solidarity with the authorities of Bogota which are in the forefront of a battle which concerns all of us.

The problem of the trafficking and consumption of drugs which has become a universal scourge, destroying in an insidious manner both developed and developing societies is a matter which touches the entire international community and must be resolutely and mercilessly fought.

Mr. President,

An illegal situation, morally and politically untenable, continues to prevail in the non-self-governing territory of East-Timor, in spite of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council calling for observance of the fundamental principles - namely concerning the right to self-determination of its people - and relevant resolutions of the United Nations regarding decolonization.

In accordance with our consistent policy of searching through dialogue and negotiation to achieve a just, comprehensive and internationally acceptable settlement of this issue, Portugal diligently collaborates, as it has since their very beginning, with the mediation efforts carried out by the Secretary - General regarding the question of East-Timor. It is, therefore, in an open and constructive manner that we have been engaged in the talks

which, under his auspices, started last May between Indonesia and Portugal, aiming at reaching an agreement on the terms of reference, modalities and timing allowing a visit to the territory by a Portuguese parliamentary delegation eventually to take place.

Though acknowledging the limited scope of this exercise, we are of the opinion that the resumption of the talks is, in itself, a positive fact and we sincerely hope it will be possible to conclude them successfully. We believe that this will certainly be helpful in creating a good atmosphere for their continuation, now on the very political substance of the question. Let me assure you, Mr. President, of our continuing readiness in cooperating, in good-faith and flexibility, with the Secretary - General in the fulfillment of the mandate entrusted to him by the General Assembly.

On the other hand, unfortunately, numerous reports have been reaching us lately - coming from different quarters, institutions (namely "Amnesty International") and individuals - giving account of a new and serious aggravation of human rights abuses in East Timor, through an intensification of military repression and harassment of the civilian population. It is worth noting, in this regard, that the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities of the Human Rights Commission has - after failing to do so last year - very recently adopted a resolution on East Timor which, "inter alia", regrets that more arrests, torture and summary executions are alleged to have taken place there since the end of 1988. I appeal to the international

community not to remain indifferent to this situation and that an end be put immediately to every form of human rights violations in East Timor.

Without peace, however, there will be no sound and lasting conditions for a return to normalcy in the territory. And peace, as demonstrated by the unexpected and stubborn persistence of the fighting there, will not be possible without a settlement that will fully respect the interests of the people of East Timor, the need of which was rightly referred to in the statement made yesterday by France, on behalf of the twelve member states of the European Community.

May I also call your attention in this respect, to the resolutions recently adopted by the European Parliament and the final communique issued by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in November 1988. A very special remark should be made, in this context, to the letter addressed by Monsignor Belo, the head of the local Catholic Church, to the Secretary-General, on February 6th, 1989, appealing to him so that the East Timorese be allowed to freely express their will on the political future of the territory, something they have been so far prevented from doing.

Portugal, needless to say, has no "neo-colonialist" objectives whatsoever concerning East-Timor. We invoke our quality of administering power solely with the aim of cooperating with the United Nations in bringing about a still incomplete decolonization process, in the light of their own basic criteria and rules, and

in accordance with our moral, historical and constitutional imperatives.

The territories that share in the Portuguese historical and cultural heritage have evolved in diverse ways. I would like here to make a particular reference to the manner in which the question of Macau has been dealt with by the People's Republic of China and Portugal. With the constant concern of securing the continued well-being and development of Macau, solutions were found that will lead to a peaceful transition of the administration of that territory so distant from Portugal but with which we have been linked by deep ties over the centuries.

Mr. President,

In his address yesterday, the Foreign Minister of France referred to other grave regional conflicts that unfortunately persist.

The continuation of the conflict in Afghanistan, the fratricide in Cambodia, the continued tension in the Korean peninsula and the serious events that took place in China last Spring cannot leave the International Community indifferent. I refer here also to the instability that prevails in the Middle East and applaud all efforts that are being exerted to bring peace to the region, namely those of President Mubarak. Allow me to stress the determination of my country to contribute in every way possible to the resolution of those problems.